

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

M a n a g e r s

OF THE

APPRENTICES' LIBRARY COMPANY,

OF

PHILADELPHIA.

Read at a Meeting of the Company, held at their Room, S. W. Corner
of Fifth and Arch Streets, March 13th, 1850, and
published by their order.

PHILADELPHIA:

KITE & WALTON, PRINTERS,

No. 50 North Fourth Street.

1850.

OFFICERS
OF
THE APPRENTICES' LIBRARY COMPANY,

ELECTED MARCH 13, 1850.

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Secretary, JAMES J. BARCLAY,
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TO THE

APPRENTICES' LIBRARY COMPANY

OF PHILADELPHIA.

ON submitting their Annual Report to the Company for the year ending 12th March, A. D. 1850, the Managers of the Apprentices' Library have the satisfaction to add the experience of another year to the testimony of many preceding ones, in favour of the growing usefulness of the institution, and the promise it affords of supplying a still increasing and more wide spread want in the community.

Its ministrations, though not confined or limited to any one class, are chiefly to that which embraces the humble and uninstructed ; offering alike to all, without distinction or partiality, an ample source of useful knowledge.

About to surrender up to the Company the trust confided to them for the year now ended, the Managers beg leave to refer to a few of the peculiar advantages of this institution in a comparative view ; and in doing so, it may be proper to observe first, to what class of persons are the benefits of the Company more particularly directed ; and secondly, what are its means, and the mode or plan of diffusing those benefits ; and in the third place, of what nature is the evidence of its salutary influences over the youth now growing up, to stamp with their own, the future character and destiny of our city.

For an answer to the first of the foregoing inquiries, it will be sufficient to refer to the corporate title of the Company itself. Its name is significant of its original purpose—to supply to the apprentice, whose time is wholly the property of a master, and whose opportunities for acquiring any general knowledge, are, (beyond the express provisions of the indenture that binds him

to service), usually very limited, and frequently wholly wanting, the means, without any conflict with the duties of his position, of acquiring a degree of knowledge, limited only, by the measure of application he may bring to its attainment.

And secondly, of its means. The Library of this Company contains at present 8590 volumes in the Boys department, and 2780 volumes in that set apart for the use of the Girls; making an aggregate of 11,370 volumes, constantly accessible to apprentices (and others in want of its benefits,) of both sexes; and that too, upon the most liberal terms, being subject to no other, than the single and easy condition—that the book loaned shall be faithfully returned. And your Managers believe that a very significant expression of the favour with which these opportunities are regarded, may be found in the fact that during the past year 21,279 books have been loaned to the boys, and 13,129 books to the girls within the same period; together making an aggregate of 34,408 books that have been sent out, to leave their impressions upon the youthful mind, within our city and county.

The mode of selecting books for this Library, is believed also to afford a valuable security against the introduction of any of a pernicious tendency; all the books are selected by a standing committee appointed for that purpose, and before any purchase is confirmed, a list of those selected is read at a meeting of the Managers; so that none of an injurious tendency, would, even by a mistake or oversight of the committee, be likely to find their way to the shelves of the Library.

This circumstance is important in two aspects; in the first place, when we consider the avidity with which the youthful mind naturally seizes upon the marvellous and extravagant, and the eagerness with which it generally appropriates to itself the lessons inculcated by vicious companions, (whether those companions be books or rational beings;) and when we take notice, secondly, of the fact, that much of the light literature of the age is stamped with evidences of the debased minds of its authors, it becomes eminently necessary, that those to whom is confided the important trust of selecting those companions, should be imbued with a proper regard for the moral character of such, whom they may distinguish by their choice.

As to the third proposition, having reference to the influences

of this Library over the moral and intellectual character of the young, who are admitted to its advantages, the Managers might adduce, as an indication thereof, the number of boys and girls at present using the Library, the annual increase of those numbers; the kind of books mostly inquired for; the fidelity and promptness with which the books loaned were generally preserved and returned; and the eagerness with which the best sort of books are constantly sought after, &c.

And moreover, the single fact alone, that in the midst of a community, so famous as is our city, for its abundance of those entertainments, which, while they attract the young with a force almost irresistible, afford them no valuable return for their time and money, nearly one thousand boys are constantly found preferring the solid and profitable entertainment furnished by this Institution, announces, as your Managers believe, in no equivocal language, the steady progress of those wholesome influences claimed for this Library.

In connection with this subject, the Managers beg leave to append to their Report, one or two short extracts, from several communications received by them during the last year, expressly imputing to the influences we have above referred to, the moral and intellectual advancement of their authors.

It will be seen, that the annual increase of the number of Boys using the Library, has apparently, during the last year, fallen short of its usual maximum.

This it is believed, is chiefly owing to the recent introduction of night schools, which have temporarily drawn a large number of boys in that direction, in pursuit of instruction not to be obtained from our Library. And added to this cause, may be mentioned also, the new and somewhat more stringent rule, (referred to in last year's report,) adopted by the Board, for greater security against false guarantees; which no doubt will, for a season, deny such the advantages of the Library, as are not at present prepared to seek them under a fair and salutary regulation.

But reference to the records of the Company, however, will show, that the numbers diverted from their attendance here by the cause first above mentioned, are fully compensated by new applicants, most of whom have not hitherto enjoyed its benefits.

Among the earliest and most valuable of our domestic chari-

ties, we cannot lose sight of the importance of sustaining an institution whose long career of usefulness, taken together with its settled and permanent and increasing abilities to do good, justly entitles it to the sober consideration and liberal support of an intelligent and benevolent community.

<p>WM. R. MAXFIELD, Sec'y.</p>	<p>J. BOUVIER, Chairman.</p>
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Extracts from the communications referred to in the foregoing Report.

“Having derived much benefit when an apprentice, from your excellent institution, I take great pleasure in presenting the accompanying volume to the Library, as an humble testimonial of gratitude, and of the many pleasing recollections associated with it.”

“As I am about leaving this city, I have felt it my duty before doing so, to return my sincere thanks for the many benefits I have derived from your Library.

“I shall ever look back with pleasure to your kindness and liberality which has held out to me (and others) so many means of improvement; and I am sorry to say that my circumstances are such at present that I can do nothing more than return you my heartfelt thanks and most lively gratitude; hoping that my condition may be such at some future day, that I may be able to aid you in this noble enterprise.”

REPORT OF BOYS' LIBRARIAN.

21,279 Books loaned during the year.

613 New applicants.

950 Now using the Library.

REPORT FROM THE GIRLS' LIBRARIAN.

13,129 Books loaned during the year.

474 New applicants.

554 Now using the Library.

REPORT OF BOOK COMMITTEE.

487 Books added to the Boys' Library.

293 Books added to the Girls' Library.

23 Members and 12 Life Members elected since last Report.

The Library is located at the south-west corner of Fifth and Arch Streets. It is open for delivery of books to Boys on every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings; and for Girls on every Thursday and Saturday afternoon.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP.

Two dollars per annum, or twenty-five dollars for life.

FORM OF A BEQUEST.

"I give, devise and bequeath to the Apprentices' Library Company of Philadelphia."

Abstract of the Account of Samuel Mason, Treasurer of the Apprentices Library Company.

1850.	1849. Third mo. 12th.	
To Cash paid for 2 years' rent of Library room,	By balance in Treasurer's hands per report of committee	\$111 29
" book committee for purchase of books,	to examine and settle his account -	
" for printing and paper, -	cash from society of Free Quakers to purchase books,	100 00
" trustees of gas works for gas, -	2 years subscription, -	1,600 00
" salaries and services, -	cash rec'd for bond paid off, -	815 50
" binding books, -	" \$500 city loan sold, -	644 44
" alteration of gas fixtures, -	" ground rent, dividends and interest, -	528 77
" room committee for sundries, -	" subscriptions of members, -	
" carpenter's work, -	" fines rec'd at Boys' and Girls' Libraries,	132 77
" reinsurance of books, -	and Catalogues sold, -	4 55
" bond secured by mortgage, -	" managers' fines, -	
" stationery, &c. -		
To balance due the Company, 3d Mo. 11th. -		\$3,937 02
	1850. Third mo. 11th.	By balance due Company, \$173 86

The undersigned, a committee appointed by the Board of Managers to examine and settle the Treasurer's account, have attended to that duty, and find the same correct, there being a balance in the Treasurer's hands due the Company Third mo. 11th, 1850, of (\$173 86) one hundred and seventy-three dollars, eighty-six cents.

SAMUEL F. TROTHER,
T. BOWDLE,

Committee.

Phil. Third mo. 11th, 1850.

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS

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